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Federal Extension Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture

BRIEF SUMMARY OF STATUS OF NATIONAL STUDY
OF HOME DEMONSTRATION MEMBERSHIP

Some Characteristics, Needs, and Interests

State	Number of counties	Stage of development
Indiana	9	Planning.
Iowa	7	Training interviewers and collecting data.
Louisiana	8	Training interviewers and collecting data.
Maryland	8	Collecting data.
Minnesota	7	Training interviewers.
Mississippi	7	Data collected. Tabulation and preliminary reporting.
Missouri	7	Training agents and interviewers.
Nebraska	6	Data collected. Preparation of schedules for I.B.M. tabulation.
New York	9	Training agents and interviewers.
North Carolina	8	Training agents and interviewers.
Ohio	6	Collection of data and editing schedules.
South Dakota	6	Data collected and being prepared for I.B.M. tabulation.
Tennessee	7	Data collected, processed and summarized--now being reported.
Texas	7	Data being collected.
Washington	8	Data partially collected and being processed for I.B.M. tabulation.
TOTAL -- 15 States	110 coun- ties	Anticipated approximately 11,000 completed schedules.

General Objectives

From time to time Federal and State extension leaders need certain information regarding home demonstration club members.

The study was planned to provide some of the needed information for use in States and on a national basis. More specifically, objectives of the study are to try to secure answers to the following questions:

1. What are some of the characteristics of home demonstration club members as to age, education, income, place of residence, gainful employment, ages and number of children, and organizational affiliations?
2. Do the women enrolled in home demonstration clubs represent a cross section of homemakers in the respective States?
3. What are the trends in the composition of home demonstration groups and in a few major areas of homemaking? Examples of this objective would be (1) the trend in the percentage of club members who are farm, rural nonfarm and urban, (2) the percentage of club members who make clothing now and at a later date.
4. What percentage of the total number of homemakers in a county are enrolled in organized home demonstration groups?
5. What are a few of the problems as expressed by homemakers?
6. How do homemakers prefer receiving information on homemaking subjects?
7. To what extent are club members giving assistance to nonclub members? Are they sharing information received through home demonstration club work?

General information

Mr. Houseman and his staff have been extremely cooperative in drawing the sample counties, both for the national part of the study and for the States who have wanted extra counties. He has had to make numerous substitutes and has done it most willingly.

Some of the State people have had some qualms regarding the use of a pre-coded questionnaire; however, we feel confident that this is the best way to do it. When they see how the editing is done and what is involved in the tabulation and analysis, they gain a sense of security.

The field agents have been kept informed of progress in the States and have been very cooperative in passing on information and problems to me.

Mrs. Grace Larson is working with me in editing and in scheduling time in the Statistical Unit for summarizing the study. She has assisted with the preparation of work tables and, of course, with the questionnaire coding.

All of our Division members have been very helpful. Sarah Ostrin, of course, typed the precoded questionnaire in preparation for multilithing, which was a major task in itself. Neil Raudabaugh and the girls in our office have all contributed time and effort to the study.

Some points from discussions with State
home demonstration leaders on possibilities
for follow-up of National Home Demonstration Study.

Research is of little value until findings are interpreted to interested groups. Home demonstration leaders have been thinking ahead on how to report and use findings from the National Study of Home Demonstration Club members. Some suggestions that have evolved from discussions among staff members are:

1. Data are to be processed and summarized as quickly as possible.
2. A two-day workshop of all State home economics extension staff members and agents from participating counties. Agricultural supervisors may also be interested. Suggested purposes of such a workshop would be (a) to study findings, decide on plans for reporting data to extension and lay groups, (b) to recommend program adjustments in light of findings, (c) to provide opportunities for increased understanding and appreciation for the use of research findings, and (d) to illustrate simple visual aids for use in presenting data.

A great benefit that could result from such a workshop would be training in the analysis and interpretation of data.

3. Some State leaders have discussed the study plans with the dean of home economics and plan to share the results of the study with them.
4. Presentation of study results to several conferences of all extension workers in a State.
5. Presentation of study results to State home demonstration councils, associations, etc. Train club members to present the information (panels, interviews, etc.).
6. Involve information people in assisting with writing of reports and in developing visuals.

Some ideas that have come into my office:

One agent wrote that the local newspaper editor had cooperated to the extent of going out and photographing a club member mailing in her questionnaire.

Another State made pictures of the training session for local leaders who were to do the interviewing.

Another agent presented the plan over radio in her county. She got a high percentage of returns.

Consultation service and other assistance to States not in the National Home Demonstration Study, but which are doing some research in the area of home economics extension:

- Wyoming: Consultation and staff training: Continuous evaluation of home economics extension programs.
- Kansas: Consultation and staff training: Five-year plan to collect information to use in (a) securing more adequate and up-to-date information for programing, and (b) evaluating results of extension teaching.
- New Hampshire: Consultation and staff training: A pilot study in Carroll County to study characteristics, needs and interests of home demonstration membership and other homemakers in the county.
- New Hampshire: Consultation and assistance: A study of consumer food marketing program in Manchester.
- Georgia: Consultation: Study of home demonstration club membership-- characteristics, needs, and interests.
- Massachusetts: Consultation and direct assistance by Dr. Gallup. A study of the knowledge and understanding which homemakers have of family economics.
- Rhode Island: Consultation: To State and county home economics extension workers on problems in evaluating their own programs and on the use of time.
- Puerto Rico: Consultation: In planning a study of the needs and interests of homemakers in Puerto Rico.
- Hawaii: Consultation by mail and in D. C. offices: Planning a study of the needs, interests, and characteristics of homemakers (members and nonmembers) in Hawaii.



